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POLITICAL FREETHINKER.

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[Price One Shilling.]

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THE
POLITICAL FREETHINKER :
OR, A
Real and Impartial Enquiry,
INTO THE
CAUSES of our late MISCARRIAGES,
AND OUR
Present MELANCHOLY SITUATION.

*In tantas brevi creverant opes, seu maritimis seu ter-
ristribus fructibus, seu multitudinis incremento, seu
sanctitate disciplinæ.* LIV.

*Ætas Parentum pejor Avis tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosorem.* HOR.

L O N D O N :
Printed for J. SCOTT, in Pater-Noster-Row.
MDCC LVII.



43.
10. 9.
140.

T H E

Political Freethinker, &c.

IT was towards the End of the second punic War, that we find the Degeneracy of the *Romans* begun : For though there had been frequent Seditions ; though the Senate had more than once oppressed the People, and the People had offered Violence to the Senate ; yet all this was done with a public Spirit.—The Authority of the Senate was looked upon as a Tyranny, that destroyed the People's Liberty ; and the Liberty of the People as Licentiousness, which threw every Thing into Disorder. But henceforward every Measure was pursued through Sordidness, and a self-interested View : The Love of their Country, and a Zeal for the public Weal, were entirely exhausted in that War, which was carried on with such Vigour against *Hannibal*, when the Virtue of the *Romans* was stretched beyond the Limits that they themselves hoped to extend it.

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From this Time Honour was looked upon as a Chimera, and Glory as a Bubble. Avarice predominated, and every one thought himself superiorly judicious, in being basely interested. The Senate unjust and corrupted, still kept up the Appearance of Dignity in external Affairs, and endeavoured to hide their Infamy. Thus did the greatest and most powerful People in the World fall a Victim to their own Vices, and become from *ancient*, to what we now see *modern Rome*.

This we should think would serve as a Beacon to Posterity, to avoid the Shoals upon which the *Roman Commonwealth* foundered; but neither this, the Destruction of *Athens*, or all the Experience of antient or modern History, will warn a People trained in Effeminacy,—enervated with Luxury—inured to Corruption—a People who have so far swerved from *Greck* and *Roman* Heroes, that they no longer resemble themselves. If a *Briton*, our Ancestor, were to rise from the Grave, one who had fell in the Cause of Liberty, and his Country at *Cresy*, where *Edward III.* vanquished *Philip of Valois*—or a Soldier of *Edward* the black Prince, his Son, who took King *John* of *France* Prisoner in the Field of *Poitiers*—or a
Subject

Subject of *Henry V.* who routed *Charles VI.* of *France* at *Agincourt*, and left the Dukes of *Alencon*, *Lorraine*, *Bar*, *Brabant* and *de Nevers*, the Constable *d'Albret*, Marshal *Boucicault*, and Admiral *Dampierre*, slain upon the Field of Battle; would they discover any Resemblance between *Britons* who lived in 1346, 1356, 1415, and in 1757? No: They would disown them for their Progeny, and believe some new Race of Pigmies laid Claim to that Title.

This will not appear exaggerated, when we consider our Conduct, for more than half a Century past. If it should be objected, that Queen *Anne's* Wars, in any Manner, oppose this Assertion; I will ask, in Return, what did we gain by them, but the ignominious Treaty of *Utrecht*, which has served ever since as a Bone of Contention, and been particularly fatal to us, in giving the *French* a Pretence for despoiling us of our *American* Possessions? And why we did not pursue the War with Vigour, after our Successes, when all the Powers of *France* were exhausted, and the House of *Bourbon*, with all the Art of *Lewis XIV.* must have courted us to Peace upon our own Terms?

But if the Battles of *Hockstet*, *Ramillies*, *Oudenard* and *Tanieres*, did in some Measure rescue our Character in the Wars of Queen *Anne*, and the last War, were sunk in Oblivion; How should we apologize for our Conduct in this—after all our Boasts of Courage and Conduct—our Phrenzy of deracinating the *French* in *America*, and making *France* a Province to *England*? Such was the Language of our political Writers in 1754, and such the Credulity of the People—that our Triumphs preceded Victory,—as well as our *Disgrace*.

Here then, do we find ourselves, after all our Efforts for supporting a Balance of Power in *Europe*—deserted by the Queen of *Hungary*, who has drained this Nation of more Blood and Treasure, than would purchase her Empire *, —mortgaged eighty Millions deep, as well to Foreigners as Natives, who by a Run upon the Funds of a *fourth Part* the first possess, might ruin the public Credit—our Commerce decaying, and supplanted—our Poor perishing by artificial Famine! In this calamitous

* This must be evident, when we consider how near the Elector of *Bavaria* was of supplanting her the last War, not only in Titles but in Possessions, and the Sums that *France* could possibly furnish upon that Occasion.

mitous Situation, Would one not be inclined to believe, that our M—rs would unite to defend us against the Tyrants of the World, and not quarrel about *Precedence*, or *Power—Titles*, or *Emoluments*,—our Comm—rs execute their Orders with Judgment, Valour and Resolution, —our Officers embrace every Opportunity of signalizing themselves, for the Protection of their Country, its Religion and Liberties?

Did these Sentiments animate our Governors and Leaders, the Fortune of War could never have precipitated us into that Abyfs, that nothing but a Miracle can prevent us perishing in; and which affords no other Prospect than a dishonourable infamous Peace, with all the Concessions that were demanded before Hostilities commenced, (and its to be feared many more;) or, a ruinous War, unassisted by one Ally. This is the alternative, and such it is, as should animate us with the Resolution to perish gloriously, rather than submit to the *Gallic* Yoke, which will grow heavier and heavier; for if the *French* are permitted to prescribe the Bounds of our *American* Colonies, how soon will they find some Pretence for diminishing them still more, and in the End appropriating them all to themselves—a
Scheme

Scheme they have long had in View, and 'till when they will never be able to complete their grand Project of *Universal Monarchy*?

We were sufficiently apprised of the Designs of the *French* in *North America*; for though they would not have come to Extremities with us in 1754, if we had let them quietly possess the Lands to the West of the *Apalachean* Mountains, in the same Latitude as *Virginia*, in order to plant Tobacco, and supplant us in that Trade (the only one, we yet remain unrivalled in, by them) their Incroachments would not have been confined to this Part only, as soon as their Marine had resumed its Vigour, and their Finances had been put in such a Condition, as to supply their immediate and necessary Wants; but we came upon them unawares, they looked upon our Commissaries at *Paris* as Hostages for the Peace, and as long as we negotiated about our Limits they thought we would not Fight for them.

There was nothing prevented our Measures having all the desired Effect, namely, “ Re-
“ possessing ourselves of all our antient Limits
“ in *America*,” but one egregious Mistake, which has run through all our Conduct for these three Years past—*We fought, when we
should*

should not—And blustered when we should Fight.
 Before we declared War we were the greatest
 Heroes of the Age; we drove the *French* be-
 fore us in *America* — And took every one of
 their Ships that dared stir out of Port—Since,
 we have done nothing (without losing one
 Possession after another, disgracing our Flag,
 and throwing away our Money, can be called
 doing something) — Except Bluster and Talk,
 send out Fleets, and call them Home again.

If we had declared War, when we began
 to make Reprisals upon the *French* Shipping,
 and pursued it with Vigour, without engaging
 any Power of the Continent in our *American*
 Quarrel (not even the El——r of H——r
 as such) nothing in all human Foresight could
 have prevented us destroying the *French* Trade
 and Navigation; hemming them in *Canada*
Proper, and prescribing such Limits to it, as
 we should have judged convenient. But when
 we roused, instead of crushing them — We
 gave the Alarm, and prepared them to pre-
 vent our Designs. Though their Marine was
 not upon the Footing they proposed it should
 be, at the Time they intended to surprise our
 Colonies in *America*; they soon found Means
 to put it in such a Condition, as to make Head
 against

against us in *America*, and keep us at Bay in *Europe*. Our own Carpenters were sent for to forward their Armaments, and our own Merchants now ensure their Safety.

Their Finances however ill-conditioned, have hitherto produced sufficient to carry on the War: If they are mortgaged, they know a Remedy for clearing them — A Sponge in *France*, has the same Efficacy, as Paper Currency, and lowering of Interest in *England*. They are both disagreeable Expedients, but they are equally inexhaustible.

To this unhappy Error, of three Years Prevalence, may be attributed all our ill Success in *America* — All our — (What shall I call it?) Negligence, Ignorance, or Disaffection, in the *Mediterranean*. Still it will be difficult to convince every *Englishman*, who is a Lover of his Country, that this is a sufficient Apology for our Conduct. What Comfort will it administer in our deplorable State — when it is considered this same Error may still prevail.

How grating it is to find, that in *America* the Rashness of a *Braddock*, has not been compensated, by the Knowledge, Prudence, and Valour of a *Loudon*; but that Fort after Fort,
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our Possessions are wrested from us by the *French*, whilst our Fleet and Armies remain inactive—Or sail from *New York*, to *Halifax*, view *Louistourgh Harbour*—and then return—How melancholy it is to observe, that the Loss of *Minorca*, and that *Poltroonery* of Admiral *Byng*, are succeeded by Expeditions, that are worse conducted—more expensive—and render us still more despicable in the Eyes of all *Europe*—than our Miscarriages in *America*—than our Ill-conduct in the *Mediterranean* !

Though it may not be surprising to think that, if we can thus expose ourselves to Ridicule and Contempt, when we pretend to protect and defend ourselves; we should not act better in assisting our Friends and Allies upon the Continent—yet it must amaze every one, to contemplate the strict Conformity all our *Measures* and *Actions* bear one to the other. If we cast our Eyes towards the *Levant*, we see our Trade lost, with our strong Hold in the *Mediterranean*, and the petty *Italian* States, despising and insulting us, for want of Conduct and Resolution.—If we turn to the *West*—how disagreeable the Perspective!—our Colonies over-run with *French* and *Indians*—their Frontiers depopulated—their Inhabitants mas-

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sacred—

sacred—our Forts razed, and Troops (in Contravention of the most explicit Capitulation) put to the Sword, and most excruciating Tortures ; nay the very Women and Children are not spared—but their Brains and Intrails remain the only Monument of the once *William Henry Fortrefs* ! Change we the Scene, and cast our Eyes on *Germany*—the Protestant Interest is upon the Point of being subverted, by the most unnatural Junction of Powers—*H—r*, the only Spot that need attract our immediate Attention there, is over-run by the *French*—its Inhabitants ruined—its Trade and Commerce destroyed—The only Hero of the Age is sacrificed by Monsters—the *Austrian Eagle*, *Gallic Cock*, and *Russian Bear*, devour him by Piece-meal—whilst the *Swift Horse*, his only Resource—frighten'd by the Shadow of the Cock (which, *Ignis fatuus* like, misguides him to the Sea) flies a contrary Road—and leaves the Monsters to their Prey—Is the Prospect the Bay of *Biscay*, where all our Hopes were to be accomplished—all our Mis-carriages to be repaired ? View we not a tremendous Armament—such a one as never before sailed from *Britain*—gazing at the *French Coast*, compleatly *Defenceless*, inviting

us to a Visit—but we are guiltless of the *Insult*—the Fleet rides out the Time of her Voyage and returns. To mention the Conquest of the *Isle of Aix*, would be an affront to the Commanders—for they would scarce be able to point out to us upon the Map, the Spot of their Victory.

Let us see then, if we cannot discover the yet latent Sources of our *triennial Error*—*Fighting, when we should not—And blustering, when we should Fight.*

The Designs of the *French* in *America*, so early as the Year 1753, were sufficiently notorious, to have roused us from that Lethargy, which the Shadow of Peace procured at *Aix la Chapelle*, in 1748, had lulled us to: If our Commissaries at *Paris* had not, from Time to Time, amused us with the Expectation of terminating all Differences, concerning the Limits of our *American* Possessions in an amicable Manner; but at length we discovered the Deceit: And the *French* in *Nova Scotia*, and those at *Crown Point*, under Baron *Dieskau*, felt the Remains of *British* Courage and Valour. Here we stopt, whilst their Armies, which at first were not nearly sufficient to make Head against us, were imperceptibly

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increased,

increased, by sending Soldiers on Board every Ship that sailed from *France* to *America*—and every Measure of ours was so public, that it was known at *Paris*, or *Quebec*, Time enough to render it infructuous. We began our Operations in *America*, where we should have finished; such an inverted Plan, has produced all the necessary Consequences that could be expected, and our continued tardy and starved Measures, under ignorant or mercenary Command—ors, have effected their own Abortion.

If the War in *America* was judged expedient in 1755, should we not have been prepared for it; since we had more than two Years Notice of the Designs of the *French*. What excuse then can be alledged, for having no Docks, or careening Wharfs, at *Halifax*, or *Boston*, from whence our large Ships are obliged to come to *England* every Year to be cleaned; and where they cannot return early enough to attack the *French* with Success, either at *Louisbourg*, up the River *St. Lawrence*, or the *Mississippi*. The Return of Admiral *Holburne's* Fleet, in that shattered Condition, is a recent and melancholy Conviction of the Necessity of such Docks, &c. in *America*; since we may reasonably conclude, if, after
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the Hurricane they had put into *Halifax*, or even *Boston*, they might, not only have been much more easily, and better repaired, than in *Europe*, the Voyage having greatly increased their Defects; but also ready upon the Spot next Spring, to have went upon such Expeditions as might be judged proper.

When we commenced Hostilities against the *French* in *Europe*, by seizing their Ships (which in general turned to little or no Account, most of them being laden with perishable Commodities, which were spoiled before they were landed, and all the Fish-ships, perhaps, a Fourth in Number, were sunk to prevent Infection) should we not have taken particular Care, that all our Possessions, particularly those in the *Mediterranean* (so much in the Vicinity of *France*, and too distant from us to be speedily succoured) were in a proper State of Defence, since we could not expect that the *French* would remain calm Spectators of the Interruption of their Commerce (after the Answer Mr. *F—x* made to Mr. *Rouillé's* Letter) which could not fail being in some Measure detrimented by the Captures that preceded the Declaration of War, though in Fact, they proved of so little Advantage to us? But,
perhaps,

perhaps, we imagined that the *French* Politeness, which was so much manifested (as we thought) in the Restitution of the *Blandford* Man of War—would render all Assistance to *Gibraltar* and *Minorca* useless; as they would restore these Possessions in Case of being taken, as they had done that Ship.

What other Motive influenced the then M——rs to leave those Possessions in such a poor Posture of Defence, as they were at the Time of *Richlieu's* Attack upon *Minorca*, I own I am at a Loss to discover, for all the World thinks we might have still been in Possession of it, if our M——rs had not been worse informed, than any Gazetteer in *Europe*; or so deeply systematic, that no Body has yet discovered their Intention of giving it up to the Enemy. Indeed their detaching ten Men of War in *bad Plight*, with only one Battalion on Board, which was to serve as Marines, and without either Hospital or Store Ship, under Admiral *Byng*—to protect the Island, and fight *Galiffioniere's* Squadron, which was much more formidable than *Byng's*, even after it was joined accidentally by *Edgecumbe's* Division—does in some Measure account for it: If we can imagine that any M——rs, could
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be so *venal*, so *corrupt*, as to let any of our Possessions slip into the Hands of our Enemies, in order to *blind the People*, and pack up such a Peace, as the seeming ill Success of our Arms could only require.

Be that as it may, the Loss of *Minorca* was of too much Importance to this Nation, to have it quietly wrested from us in such an ignominious Manner ; the worthy Citizens of *London* took the Alarm, and addressed the Throne for an Enquiry into the Cause of our Miscarriage—the apparent Authors of our Misfortunes, withdrew from Power ; and the specious Name of Reform, in some Measure quieted the Minds of the People, who flatter'd themselves that a Change of Men, would have produced a Change of Measures.

How far our Expectations would have been accomplished, if that *Hydra-Party-Opposition* had not raised his Crest, and overturned all the Measures of our patriot Ministry, it will be difficult to determine. But what could be hoped from a Nation, rent with internal Factions, with all the Springs of Action disjointed, at a Time our inveterate Foes were preparing and forwarding their Plan of the approaching Campaign ? The Enquiry into the Cause of
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the Loss of *Minorca* was on Foot ; our Patriots were too busy in preventing any Part of this Enquiry being *stifled* ; or any Resolution being taken incompatible with Facts, traced upon the Examination of the Affair—Therefore if our *American* Colonies were not succoured in Time—if *Holburne's* Fleet did not arrive early enough to succour Lord *Loudon*, and carry Cape *Breton*—there is an Excuse for it. But when all domestic Contentions about Power and Precedence, all *impartial* and *unfeigned* Enquiries about the Loss of *Minorca* were over—in short, when the Coalition, which flattered us with such an unanimous Pursuit of vigorous and constitutional Measures, as would retrieve our Affairs, and once more make us the Envy and Admiration of *Europe*, took Place—How can we account for our Miscarriages ?

What remains, then, to be discussed is the Cause of our Miscarriages, since the *Coalition*, which comprehend those upon the Continent, and in our late Expedition to the Coast of *France* : And with this View it will be necessary to examine with some Precision, the Part we acted upon the Continent, since the Commencement of Hostilities ; and in what Manner

Manner our continental Connections have operated upon our naval Expeditions.

Though it has been asserted, that the Queen of *Hungary* rejected our Proposals of Alliance; it should be considered she thought, like many more, that our Quarrels in *America*, could no wise affect the Empire; nay, even though they should produce a War* between *England* and *France*, for their Decision. She well knew there was no Occasion to apprehend any Attack upon the Electorate of *H——r*, as long as the El——r of *H——r*, as such did not engage in the Rupture; therefore there was no Necessity for taking any Precautions for its Protection. Had the *French* made any Motions to attack it, the Queen of *Hungary* would have been obliged to assist the El——r, in preventing their Designs: And, even, the *French*, however they might have been inclined to hurt the *English* in that tender Part; would not have chose to bring on a *German* War, with the Head of the Empire, as well as the El——r of *H——r*, only for a Diversion in *Germany*.

But we will, even suppose the El——te was in Danger, were not the fifty Thousand *Russians*, and eight Thousand *Hessians*, with
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the Troops of *H—r*, a sufficient Security against any Attacks of the *French*, even without the Assistance of the *Austrians*; who could have had no Pretence, and would not have acted so much against their common Interest, as not to join in opposing any Incurfions of the *French* into the Empire, in Contravention of the Treaty of *Westphalia*? If we had taken no further Precautions, and even these were unnecessary, for the Protection of *H—r*, the War that is light up in *Germany*, would never have been kindled, and we might have saved this Nation *two Millions, two Hundred Thousand Pounds*, which have been already publickly applied for its Support.

It may, perhaps, be objected, that the King of *Prussia* declared, he would oppose the Entrance of all foreign Troops into the Empire. But was there any Occasion, for introducing any on the Part of *H—r*, without the *French* actually entered it, to attack that Elect—te? No; and, then if the King of *Prussia* had still refused the *Russians*, our Auxiliaries, a Passage through his Dominions, surely the Obstacles the *French* would have met with after they had passed the *Rhine*, if not by the Princes, whose Territories they must

must have traversed (and particularly the King of *Prussia*, who had made this Declaration) at least by the *Han——ns*, *Hessians*, &c. in the Pay of *H——r* and *Great Britain*, would have sufficiently kept them at Bay, till the *Russians* came round by Sea to the *Elbe*, and there effectually opposed the *French*.

Thus the Measures we had taken, put us out of all kind of Apprehension for the Fate of *H——r*, which could never be in Danger, so long as she did not assist *Great Britain*, as an Auxiliary, in the War against *France*.— But even this Step, which was of no Manner of Use, and which was occasioned only by our Fears of *Flat-bottom'd-boats*, that never existed (so well were we inform'd of the Designs of the *French*, or so prudently did we make use of our Knowledge!) I say, even the calling over 8000 *Hanoverians* for our Protection, could never have produced that unnatural Alliance, between the Houses of *Austria* and *Bourbon*— could never have annihilated our Treaty with *Russia*, if the Declaration of the King of *Prussia* “ That he would oppose the “ Entrance of all foreign Troops into the “ Empire,” (at a Time that neither we, or *H——r* had any need of them) had not so

terrified us, that we courted the Alliance of this Prince, which we knew would create the Jealousy of *Austria* and *Russia*, if not immediately throw them into the Arms of *France*—sacrificed all the Pretensions of the El——r of *H——r*, to *East-Friesland*—and satisfied all the enormous Demands (which we had so long opposed) for *Prussian* Captures made the last War; and which, according to *Grotius*, and the Determination of all our *Courts* and *Judges*, were *legal Prizes*——and concluded THE TREATY OF WESTMINSTER.

It is to this famous Treaty, that we may ascribe all our Miscarriages upon the Continent—it is to this Treaty we may attribute the Conduct of *Russia*—the unnatural Alliance between the Houses of *Austria* and *Bourbon*—an Alliance, that must render this War, if pursued by us upon the Continent, not only the most expensive, but the most unsuccessful of any we were ever yet engaged in. For it requires not the Eyes of an *Argus* to see, that the King of *Prussia* must submit to Peace with the Conquerors, *upon their own Terms*, or pursue a War that must end in his Destruction. If he has not agreed to a Cessation of Arms with *France*, as the Battle of *Weissenfels*,
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of the 5th of *November* evinces—will that Advantage, or any other that human Foresight can devise, retrieve his Affairs? Suppose the Victory over the Prince *de Soubise*, as compleat as possible—can that do any more than raise the Siege of *Leipzig*, and retard the Fate of that Prince? The unfortunate Battle of *Chotemitz* of the 18th of *June*, when he lost so many Men, and was obliged to raise the Siege of *Prague*, retreat to *Bohemia*, and divide the small Remains of his Army, for the Protection of his own Dominions, can never be retrieved—all his Hopes were then placed in the Succours he would receive from the Army of Observation, which nothing but his ill Success had prevented, being reinforced by his own Troops; but when they flew before the Enemy to a Corner of the *Elbe*, to be hemmed in on all Sides, to prostrate themselves before the *French*, and lay the *H—n* Arms at their Feet—What was left for *Frederick* to do? He had no Mission for operating Miracles—he had already done Wonders, and amazed even those who conquered him.

However incompatible with our true Interest, the Treaty of *Westminster* might be; when we had allured the King of *Prussia* by
our

*our fine Promises, to quit the Alliance of France ; and brought all the Powers of Europe upon his Back ; we should not have deserted him to the Mercy of his Enemies. To the Eyes of every discerning Man, Affairs were in no worse Plight upon the Continent, before the Retreat of the H——ns to Stade (instead of Magdebourg—What a Mistake !) than they were at the Day of Signing the Treaty of Westminster.—All the Consequences 'till then were foreseen—But nobody could devise that extraordinary Step—Which cannot be called by so good a Name, as a *Miscarriage* ;—For it was *voluntary* ; and the Convention of Neutrality (that is deserting the K—— of P—— to be sacrificed by his Enemies) was the immediate and necessary Consequence.*

If it be imagined that the Retreat of the *Russians* may favour the Success of his *Prussian* Majesty — How must we employ the *French*, the *Austrians*, the *Saxons* and the *Swedes* ? If against him, Where must he find Armies to oppose them ? Will any Sums that we can grant, procure him a sufficient Number of Troops to drive the *Austrians* out of *Silesia*, and make them evacuate *Schweidnitz*,
 now

now fallen into their Hands (with three Squadrons of Dragoons, three of Huffsars, 5000 Men in Garrison, 162 Pieces of Cannon, 12 Mortars, Provisions and warlike Stores in Abundance, and the military Chest, containing a Million of *German* Florins)—Force the *Swedes* out of *Pomerania*—Prevent the Return of the *Russians* under an alert and expeditious General---Frustrate the Designs of the *French* upon *Hanover*, in Case the Troops of that Electorate should be put in Motion to join the *Prussians* --- Prevent the re-assembling the *French* and *Austrians* in *Saxony*, or their being reinforced by *Richlieu's* Army?

If the ill Conduct of Affairs in *Germany* should not influence the H—se of C——s ; or the C——n not be thought to have been purchased at a sufficient Price ; Can we afford to grant any immense Sums for foreign Connections ? Is there one Thing that will bear a Tax, that is not almost prohibited by it ? Will the fine-spun *Lottery Schemes* do ? Infatuated as the *English* are after Gaming, they know their own Interest too well, *to give a Shilling, to play for a Shilling* : Besides, the lower Sort, who are most the Dupes, will have lost
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the *Itch* for Gaming, by the Time another Lottery is drawn: All their Amusement in public Houses is taken away now—And they are only allowed to get *soberly* drunk, and box for their Reckoning, to know who is the *best Man*. Another *Guinea Lottery*, instead of having six Classes filled, will not produce Money enough to pay its Expences. *Funding* and *Jobbing*, are against the Principles of the present M——ry.—But laying that aside, and the bad Consequences they produce to the Nation—Are not these the only Resources we have left for our own Wants? Must Posterity be mortgaged for a *G——rm——n* War, in which we are not concerned?—*H——r* is out of the Question, now a *Neutrality* is obtained for it; and however ridiculous may have been the Measure that produced it, we should be much to blame, if we did not turn it the most to our Advantage.—When Posterity shall be acquainted, that after the Battle of *Hastenbeck*, where there was no *Victory* obtained, the El——te Army retired to *Stade*, without once endeavouring to face the Enemy, and there concluded a *glorious* Con——n, by which they were obliged to sacrifice the Protestant Interest of the Empire—Lay down their Arms,
and

and devote the *El——te* to the Mercy of the *French*; though the *Han——n* Army was composed of 36,000 Men, and the *French* Army of not above a third more.—How will they be astonished, when they immediately find, that his *Prussian* Majesty, before a few Weeks were elapsed, gained a complete Victory, at the Head of not more than 20,000 Men, over the allied Army, composed of near 60,000 Men? To what Excuse will they be able to ascribe this great Disparity in Conduct? Surely they will not imagine, the *Furniture* of *H——r——n——n*, or any Treasure that might have been sent from thence to *Stade*, could so far prevail over the *H——ns*, much less the *E—— G——l*, as to procure the ever memorable Con——n of the 8th of *September*? How vain will be their Endeavours to trace Facts for the Cause? What Judgment will they form of the Motion of the *H——ns*, upon the Arrival of four *English* Men of War in the *Elbe* (not to take any Thing on board, but *protect the Navigation of that River*)? Will they not imagine they had finished their Campaign and compleated the Design of their Retreat? If they should be informed that in Violation of the Neu—t—l—ty (which we

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supposed the *French* had first broke) the *H—ns*, actually marched to join the *Prussians*; will they not expect to find a few Pages after, that the *French* had demolished the principal Towns of the *El—te*, or committed great Cruelties upon the Inhabitants; or that the King of *Denmark*, Mediator and Guaranty of the *Con—n*, had resented the Affront, and joined his Arms with those of the Allies? Will they not Shudder at the Situation of *L—d A.* and *Co—l A.* given as Hostages for the punctual Observance of the *Con—n*?

But it is Time to quit the disagreeable View of our Measures upon the Continent, since turn which ever Way we will, nothing but *Blunders, Mistakes, Palliatives, and incongruous Measures* present themselves.

Let us now consider, whether any secret Article in that famous Convention, could be productive of the ill Success of our late Expedition.

The Fleet, that was some Weeks ready at *Spithead*, waiting for the Transports from the *Downs*, failed from thence, with the Troops
the

the Eighth of *September*, and cleared the Channel the 13th of the same Month. Mr. *Lamb*, the Messenger, arrived at *Whitehall* with the Convention of Neutrality, the 19th of *September*, which was the Day the Fleet arrived off the Coast of *France*, between *Rochelle* and *Rochfort*, when the Signal was given for the Fleet to lay to, though the Wind was fair, and the Weather clear. From this it appears, the News of the Convention, could not, as yet, at least any wise affect the Conduct of the Commanders; and that all that has been suggested, concerning the secret Articles of the same, are vague and void of Foundation, will appear from the Declaration made to Mr. *Mitchel*, the *Prussian* Minister—

“ That it never was his Majesty’s Intention,
 “ that the said Overtures (*for the Convention*)
 “ made *without the Participation of the British*
 “ *Council*, should have the least Influence on
 “ his Majesty’s Conduct as *King*.” But, even, suppose this Declaration not to have sufficient Weight: The Impracticability of any fresh Orders being sent, in Consequence of the Advice of Signing the Convention, to countermand the Instructions of Ad——l H——e and G——l M——t, bearing Date the 5th

of *August*, must be evident, when we consider that the *Viper* Sloop, which sailed from *Plymouth* the 17th of *September*, carried with her Mr. P—'s Letter, bearing Date the 15th of that Month, which was two Days before the Arrival of the News of Signing the Convention; and that the *Viper* Sloop carried the last Orders, that were sent to the Comm——rs, while they were in the Bay of *Biscay*.

This Matter being cleared as far as *Facts* and *Dates* can testify; it may be necessary to consider the Practicability of the Measure: And with this view, we will examine the best and most specious Arguments that have been urged, to prove the Impracticability of Landing the Troops (at or near *Rockfort*) carrying the Place, or destroying the Shipping.

Although it be true, that there are four or five Thousand Sailors belonging to *Rockfort*, who might be useful in a Siege; it is necessary to remark, that the greatest Part, if not all, are actually employed on Board the *French* Men of War, that sailed from that Port, and are at Present on their Voyage in *America*, or the *East Indies*: Which will appear incontestable, when we reflect that *French* Privateers have

have been recalled from their Cruizes, in order to Man the Men of War, that are fitting out at *Rochfort*.

As to the State of the Fortifications there, it is quite different from what has been represented. It is true, it was Fortified by *Lewis* the XIVth, upon *Vauban's* Plan ; but it should be remembered, that this City was built and fortified by *Lewis* the XIVth, in 1679, and was then looked upon in its infant State. It has received little or no Alteration or Repairs since, and the Fortifications are according to the best Accounts at present in a very ruinous Condition. When Co——l C——ke was there in 1754, he had an Opportunity of examining all the Fortifications, and though he destroyed the Plans he had drawn of them, at his Departure, for fear of being taken up as a Spy ; he retained so perfect an Idea of their Disposition and Force, that he drew them afresh upon his Arrival here, and annexed thereto, his Opinion of the Facility of carrying the Place ; and the P——vy C——l, having examined them, it was in Consequence thereof, the Expedition

Expedition was set on Foot, and he was named Chief Engineer upon the Occasion.

That *Rockfort* was still in the same defenceless Situation at the Time of the Arrival of the Fleet in the Bay, was corroborated by the Engineer, Commandant, and Fisherman, taken at the Isle of *Aix*, with whom C——l C—ke was very intimate; and he having pointed out to the Engineer that Part of *Rockfort*, which was weakest, when he was there, the Engineer confirmed there had been no Addition, or Alteration since. The Suggestion that the Ditch could be innundated, is void of Foundation, the Inequality of the Ground not permitting it.

But we will suppose it as impregnable as *Bergen-op-zoom* or *Gibraltar* was thought to be—Might it not have been carried? That the Debarkation of the Troops, without any considerable loss was practicable, is evinced by C——l C—ke and several other Officers landing, and going some Miles without any Molestation, though there was a Battery of two Guns at the Point of the *Peninsula* on which they debarked; and if
Fort

Fort *Fouras* had been demolished or taken (which might easily have been done by Storm, as it was weak, there being only a Platform of Twenty-four Embrasures towards the Water Side, and being on the same narrow *Peninsula*, it might have been attacked on all Sides) as Captain *Corn—ll* proposed to do with his single Ship; there would have been no Obstacle to the March of the Troops, from thence to *Rockfort*, at the Distance perhaps of three Leagues.

But if this was thought too dangerous (though *Fouras*, if taken would have served as a Place of Retreat, if the Troops had not succeeded in the Attack upon *Rockfort*) Why was not Captain *Corn—ll* allowed to make a Feint towards *Rockelle*, and the Isle of *Rbee*, while the Troops might have landed without any kind of Opposition near *Chaitelaillon*?

These are indisputable Facts, and prove, that if the Fleet, instead of laying six Days inactive, at near three Leagues Distance from Shore, while Councils of War were held to judge of the Expediency of—*doing nothing*, had come within a proper Distance
of

of Shore to cover the Descent (if they had not chose *to risk* battering any of the Forts) all our most sanguine Wishes would have been accomplished. Perhaps it will be answered, *we were not acquainted with the Soundings* — This is another Falacy ; for all the Experiments that were made, in this Respect, entirely corresponded with the Charts, they were before furnished with ; and the Navigation of the River *Charante* was found (*as it was judged before*) so practicable, that the Pilot of the *Magnanime* offered to conduct them up it. But suppose the Fact ; should not proper Persons have been detached to have made these Discoveries, as soon as the Comm——rs opened their Instructions, which was when they had cleared the Channel ; before the Fleet made its Appearance off the *French Coast*, where they must remain, so long as was necessary to make those Discoveries, *inactive*, and alarm the Inhabitants ?

It was to the Appearance of the Fleet, that any Troops that might have been gathered to encamp in View, is to be attributed : Nor is it surprising, though there
were

were but ten thousand from *Valery* to *Bayonne*, an Extent of four hundred Miles, since they had six Days allowed them for collecting them ; though at the End of that Time, they could not have been sufficiently numerous, to have prevented our Debarkation, if we had *attempted it*.

But if it had been impracticable to land the Troops, or carry the Place, Was there any Obstacle to destroying the Shipping, besides the Risk that must be run on such an Occasion ? Was not the *Charante* navigable for *Fire Ships* and *Bomb Ketches* ? If not, how do the *French* get their second Rate Men of War built there into the Bay ? The terrifying *Encampments* on Shore, however numerous they might appear (*in Buckram*) upon the 1st of *October*, and which did not even exist the 19th of *September*, could not have prevented their Success. The formidable Battery of two Cannons (which never played while Col. C—ke and the other Officers landed) upon the Point of the Peninsula ; or the still more formidable one of six at *Chatellaillon* (which must have been the only Motive to pre-

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vent

vent the Debarkation near there) could have been no Obstacle to this.

But it were needless to add any Thing to prove the Practicability of having not only burnt the Shipping, and landed the Troops, but also carried the Place; when the defenceless Situation thereof, and the Number of Troops * to oppose us, are considered: Therefore the Cause of our Miscarriage in this Respect, must be incontestible; for who can imagine that Mr. *P—tt* is any way to blame, if the pretended secret Articles in the Conv——n of Neut——l——ty did not effect the ill Success of the Expedition; and if no other Cause can be discovered for inducing him to throw away a Million or two of the public Money (in such a Time of Need) for a *Mock Expedition*, without proposing one single the least Advantage to the Nation by it?

The Instructions given to G—— M—— and A—— H—— of the 5th of *August*, were clear and explicit. They were or-

* As there were but 10000 upon the whole Coast, from *St. Valery* to *Bayonne*, there could not possibly be above 700 in this Spot.

dered

dered to attempt, as far as should be found practicable, a Descent upon the *French* Coast, at or near *Rochfort*, in order to attack if possible, and by a vigorous Impression, force that Place, and to burn and destroy to the utmost of their Power, all Shipping, Docks, Magazines and Arsenals, as shou'd be judged most proper for annoying the Enemy; and as the Bay of *Biscay* is a dangerous Navigation in the Winter Months, they were ordered to return, with the Fleet and Forces under their Command, by the End of *September*: But as they were detained by contrary Winds above a Month at *Spithead*, and the Limitation of Time might frustrate the Intent of their Voyage; Mr. P—'s Letter, of the 15th of *September* was wrote expressly, to inform them, that the Time prescribed in their Instructions of the 5th of *August*, was not to be attended to, if it should interfere with the full Execution of the first and principal Object of the Expedition, or any other particular Attempt, which agreeable to their Orders, they should have commenced, and in the Execution whereof, they should actually be engaged. Nevertheless the Comm——rs

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remained inactive from the Receipt of Mr. P—'s Letter, to the Time of their Return to *England*, that is from the 22d of *September*, to the 1st of *October*.

As the House of Commons seem to have intimated in their Address to his Majesty, their Expectations of a further Enquiry into the Cause of this Miscarriage (conceived in these Words, *viz.* “ Your faithful Com-
 “ mons firmly rely, that as your Majesty
 “ in your Royal Justice has endeavoured to
 “ trace the Causes of past Disappointments,
 “ your Majesty will also in your high Wisdom open better Hopes of future Prosperities, by invigorating our Enterprizes,
 “ and animating the Attempts of the *British*
 “ Arms”) there is Reason to suppose it will be set on Foot; therefore, I shall decline for the Present, adding any Thing to what I have said, to point out the Cause of this ill Success of our late Expedition, as this *Enquiry* is meant not to anticipate *Judgment*, but promote *Justice*: And with this view also, I present the Reader with the following Extracts from Mr. Nug—t's Speech in the H—e of C—s, at the Time that they were
 examining

examining the Conduct of Admirals *Matthews* and *Lestock* in the *Mediterranean*.

“ If we consider, Sir, what ought always
 “ to be esteemed of the highest Importance, the Honor of the Crown, we shall
 “ quickly find, that we cannot discover our
 “ Loyalty by any Action which may more
 “ justly claim the Regard of our Sovereign,
 “ than Perseverance in our endeavours to
 “ detect the true Cause of our late Miscarriage.—It is well known that Monarchs
 “ are honoured only in Proportion as they
 “ are feared, and they can be feared only
 “ because their Arms are successful; he
 “ who cannot punish will certainly be injured,
 “ and he who is either unfaithfully
 “ or ignorantly feared will not be able to
 “ punish. Military Reputation is the Basis
 “ of Power, and that Prince, or that private
 “ Man, will find fewest Provocations, of
 “ whom it is most generally believed that
 “ his Resentment is to be feared.

“ It is therefore in the highest Degree
 “ necessary, that if the Sword of our Sovereign
 “ reign has been rusted by long Inaction,
 “ its Edge should be restored by the Care
 “ of

“ of this Assembly ; that if Military Virtue,
 “ that Virtue for which this Nation has
 “ been so long renowned, begins to lan-
 “ guish, it should be revived by just and
 “ certain Distributions of Censure and of
 “ Honor ; that Negligence should be a-
 “ waken’d by the Dread of Punishment,
 “ and that Bravery should be animated by
 “ the Prospect of Reward ; that our Mo-
 “ narch may be once more the great Ar-
 “ biter of the World, and that the Ocean
 “ may again be subject to the Dominion of
 “ G—— B——, that our Flag may strike
 “ Terror into all Nations that shall gaze
 “ upon it from their Shores, and spread its
 “ influence to the remotest Corners of the
 “ World.—

, “ But in this Enquiry we must extend
 “ our Views yet farther, and consider our-
 “ selves not only as inspecting the Behavi-
 “ our of our Seamen, but as endeavouring
 “ to revive every Military Virtue ; that
 “ Virtue, without which no State can be
 “ long either happy or great, and of which
 “ the visible Declension has therefore al-
 “ ways been considered as the certain Fore-
 “ runner

“ runner of speedy Ruin. That our Mi-
 “ litary Skill should decline in a long In-
 “ terval of War is always to be expected ;
 “ for who will study those Rules, which
 “ he has no Opportunity of using, or busy
 “ himself in acquiring Knowledge, which
 “ can give him no Superiority or Distinc-
 “ tion, since it cannot be known that he
 “ possesses it ? But that the Genius of the
 “ Nation should lose its Vigour, and that
 “ Courage as well as Art should be lost
 “ among us ; that we should be not only
 “ unable to obviate, but afraid to encounter
 “ Danger ; and that we should become the
 “ Scorn of those whom our Name used
 “ formerly to terrify, is surely not to be
 “ thought without Indignation, or without
 “ Resolution to search out the Causes of
 “ such destructive Depravity ; a Depravity,
 “ which cannot be supposed to be the Ef-
 “ fect of Inaction only, since it was never
 “ known to be produced by it in any for-
 “ mer Time. We have formerly enjoyed
 “ a long Continuance of Peace *, but have

* What must our Comm——rs say, when they
 want even this Plea, of *long Tranquility* for their Mis-
 conduct ?

“ returned

“ returned to the Battle with our antient
 “ Intrepidity, though not with our former
 “ Address, and have taught our Foes in all
 “ foregoing Times, that we had Hearts
 “ though we wanted Discipline. Even
 “ those who by long Experience of War
 “ were enabled to resist us, were yet com-
 “ pelled to applaud our Bravery, and though
 “ we have sometimes been *defeated*, we
 “ have till *now* never been *despised*.

“ This fatal Alteration of our Character
 “ requires all our Sagacity and all our At-
 “ tention. Cowardice is the greatest Crime
 “ that can be committed against the Pub-
 “ lic; and a Nation of Cowards can never
 “ hope either for Quiet or for Freedom.
 “ A Nation of Cowards is indeed such a
 “ Term of Reproach as might be hoped
 “ incapable of Application, and which
 “ surely every Nation must be desirous of
 “ averting from itself; yet if we consider
 “ how much all the Arts emasculating the
 “ Mind have been of late promoted, and
 “ how industriously those Notions have been
 “ propagated, which tend to destroy all
 “ Regard but to immediate Self-interest, it
 “ may reasonably be concluded, that there
 “ are

“ are some at least who do not think general Cowardice a public Calamity.

“ The numberless Corruptions which
 “ have crept into public Transactions, and
 “ private Life, and which tend all to one
 Point, and form the complicated Cause of
 “ universal Cowardice, tho’ it ought, as
 “ soon as we have any Rest from immediate
 “ Disasters, to be our great Care to detect
 “ and eradicate them, it is not at present
 “ necessary to mention; for our Distress
 “ requires the Operation of more active and
 “ violent Remedies. We ought not to
 “ amuse ourselves at present with enquiring
 “ after remote or contingent Causes, but
 “ endeavour to counter-work them, whatever
 “ they may be, and to make that Selfishness
 “ which pre-dominates among us, operate in
 Favour of the Public, by the
 “ steady and honest application of Hopes
 “ and Terrors, and teach those whom we
 “ entrust with the Safety of the Public,
 “ that it is less hazardous to do their Duty,
 “ than to neglect it.

“ This is the only Expedient by which
 “ our—Honor can be restored, our Trade
 G “ preserved,

“ preserved, and our Military Virtue re-
 “ vived ; and this Expedient is in our own
 “ Power. For this it is necessary, we de-
 “ clare our Sentiments of this fatal Trans-
 “ action, in a signal and extraordinary
 “ Manner, and that we make use of such
 “ Terms as that all Delinquents may be in-
 “ cluded, and none may have reason to
 “ boast of Exception, or to complain of
 “ Malignity.”

These were the Sentiments of that learned
 Senator and true Patriot, upon that Occa-
 sion ; and however the Circumstances of
 that Affair may differ from our late Miscar-
 riage, the Conduct of the *Spanish* War,
 and the Commencement of that with *France*
 furnished a much more favourable Prospect
 of Success, than that we are now engaged
 in. *Minorca* was still in our Hands, and
America felt not the cruel Effects of Bar-
 barbarian Enemies instigated by *French* Policy ;
New York was in no danger of being *entirely*
 wrested from us ; and the *New-Englanders*
 soon after made themselves Masters of *Cape-*
Breton. Yet with what Energy he repre-
 sents the fatal Tendency of Corruption, the
 Effects

Effects of Cowardice, the Necessity of eradicating the one, and punishing the other ! How much more should they be now guarded against, that our All is at Stake ; and nothing but the most vigorous Exertion of *Virtue* and *Conduct*, can save us from impending Ruin ! We are blest with a mild indulgent Prince, who like a common Father attends to every our least Concern : We are particularly fortunate too, in having our Affairs conducted by an Administration, who without the least Bias to Self-interest, make the Honor and Happiness of the People the rule of their Actions ; and however unsuccessful our Measures may have been, the most partial must allow they are *now* planned with the utmost Prudence, and conducted with the greatest Secresy. But it depends upon ourselves to be virtuous—to act like *Britons*—to remonstrate to our Representatives, when we see Occasion, and be unawed by no Power in the Exercise of our Duty.

But is there any Reason to fear that Justice will not take Place with respect to any that may be found criminal, since we have
had

had such recent Examples of the Exercise of it, with respect to G——l F——ke and Ad——l B——g; though the first was broke for disobeying Orders which he did not understand, and were in themselves contradictory and unintelligible; and the latter, was sent out with ten *ill conditioned* Ships to oppose a much superior Enemy, whom he beat—and *was Shot?* There are indeed Hopes that such Severity, will not be extended to a certain C———r, since upon his Arrival he kissed H——ds, instead of being suspended or imprisoned.



F I N I S.

